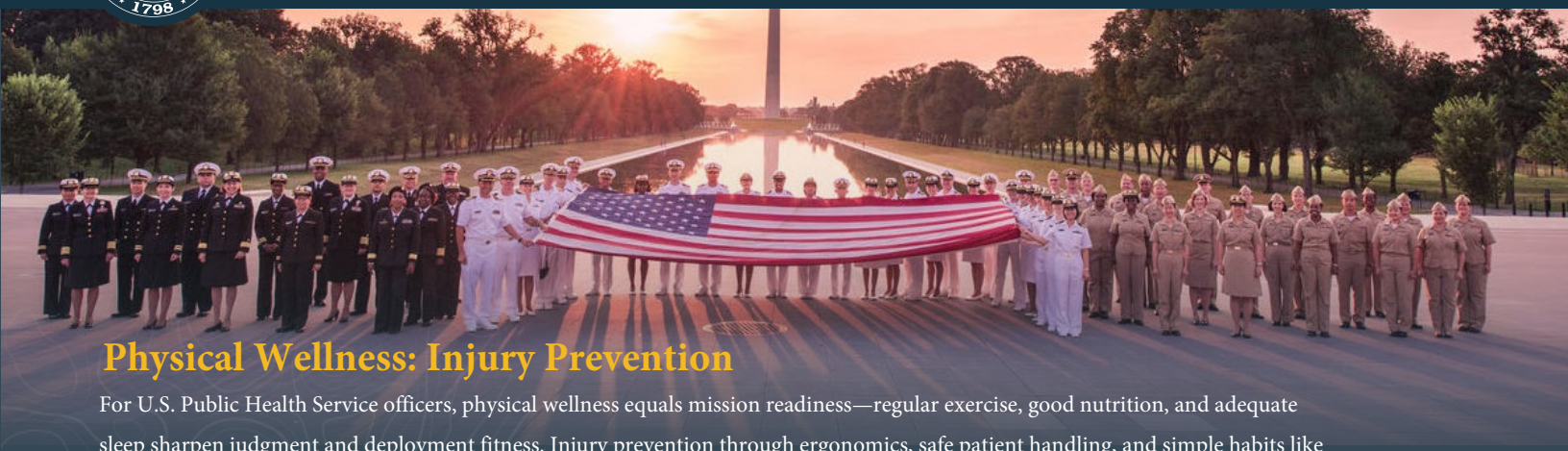
U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
COMMISSIONED CORPS



Physical Wellness: Injury Prevention

For U.S. Public Health Service officers, physical wellness equals mission readiness—regular exercise, good nutrition, and adequate sleep sharpen judgment and deployment fitness. Injury prevention through ergonomics, safe patient handling, and simple habits like micro-breaks and stretching keeps officers on duty and deployable. Treat your body as critical equipment: maintain it to protect your career, model healthy behavior, and strengthen public health response.

Background

Injury prevention reduces morbidity, preserves workforce readiness, and lowers healthcare costs by addressing risk factors before harm occurs.

Facts

7 Key Strategies



1. Warm-Up and Cool-Down:
   Warm-Up: Begin each workout with a warm-up to gradually increase your heart rate and loosen your muscles. This can include light aerobic activities and dynamic stretches.
   Cool-Down: After exercising, take time to cool down by walking for 5-10 minutes and performing static stretches to help your body recover.
2. Stay Hydrated:
   Drink plenty of water before, during, and after your workout to prevent dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke. Proper hydration is crucial for maintaining performance and reducing injury risk.
3. Use Proper Equipment and Techniques:
   Wear appropriate footwear that provides support and fits well. Ensure that any protective gear, such as helmets or pads, is in good condition and suitable for your activity. Use the correct techniques to minimize the risk of injury. Consider working with a coach or trainer if you are unsure.
4. Gradual Progression:
   When starting a new exercise program or increasing intensity, do so gradually. Avoid pushing yourself too hard too quickly, as this can lead to overuse injuries.
5. Cross-Training:
   Vary your workouts to avoid overusing the same muscle groups. Incorporate different types of exercises, such as running, swimming, and strength training, to promote overall fitness and reduce the risk of repetitive strain injuries.
6. Listen to Your Body:
   Pay attention to any signs of pain or discomfort. If you feel tired or experience pain, take a break and allow your body to recover. Continuing to exercise through pain can lead to more serious injuries.
7. Be Aware of Your Surroundings:
   Be mindful of what is around you. Check and double check equipment for safety. Dress for the weather and the and the busyness of your workout setting. Stay alert for dangers.

Resources

- https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/browse-objectives/injury-prevention
- https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000859.htm
- https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr4902a3.htm#tab1